



Shaue Sar, First Ascent via North Face and Northeast Ridge; Chikkorin Sar, South Face

Pakistan, Karakoram, Hispar Muztagh

For three years my dream had been to explore the Momhil Valley, and in mid-May I was finally able to reach it in the company of Austrians Philipp Brugger and Lukas Waldner. Our original objective had been Dut Sar (6,858m), but the weather was generally unstable, with no promising forecast. [Dut Sar was climbed in August 1993 by Italians Giacomo Scaccabarozzi and Riccardo Verderio. They climbed the south face to reach the east ridge at 5,850m, then continued up the crest in deep snow to the summit.] **Instead we made the first ascent of Peak 6,663m (36°23'30.41"N, 75°7'33.14"E), south of Ambarin Sar.**

We started around 3 a.m. on May 27 from our advanced base camp in the valley at 4,650m, and made a single-push ascent and descent in 16 hours. (Brugger continued down to base camp the same day.) Traveling light, with a stove but no bivouac gear, we climbed the north face to reach the upper northeast ridge at around 6,200m. Except for the last 100m, where the angle increased to 85°, we climbed unroped up the ca 1,400m north face, then kept the rope on for the northeast ridge because of potential crevasses. The ascent took 11 hours. The descent was mostly downclimbing, although many rappels from V-threads were needed on icy sections. We named the mountain Shaue Sar, because we discovered so many ibex near our base camp. Shaue means "horns" in a local dialect.

Prior to this, on the 23rd, during the acclimatization phase, I soloed a new route on Chikkorin Sar (5,810m GPS, 36°26'15.71"N, 75°6'42.85"E). The approach from our advanced base to the foot of the 600m south face was quite long. I climbed more or less directly to the summit via snow and ice runnels. I named the climb Azam Line (TD 85°), after the man who helped us at base camp and with logistics. [Chikkorin Sar was first climbed by the 1993 expedition noted above; Verderio, Scaccabarozzi, and Rahmat Ullah Baig reached the summit in nine hours from their base camp by climbing the west rib onto the northwest ridge at 5,500m, then following the crest to the summit. Verderio descended by paraglider.]

At the end of the month the weather was bad, and after more exploration of the valley to establish future possibilities, we returned to the Shimshal Valley. I walked east and had a look up the Zartgarben Valley in the Shuijerab Mountains, where I was attracted by a rock peak to the east, just south of where the trail leads up to the Unween-e-Sar pass. On June 7, I climbed the 500m west face of this peak at UIAA VII. I named the route Dolomite Hunza, and the peak Croz von Zartgarben (4,650m, 36°28'15.17"N, 75°22'21.85"E).

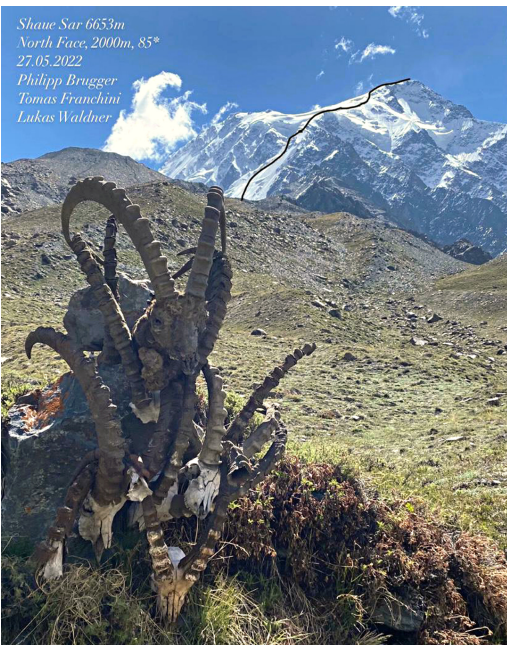
Most of the Momhil Valley remains untouched by climbers. The faces and the approaches are wild and complicated, making it really adventurous.

– Tomas Franchini, Italy

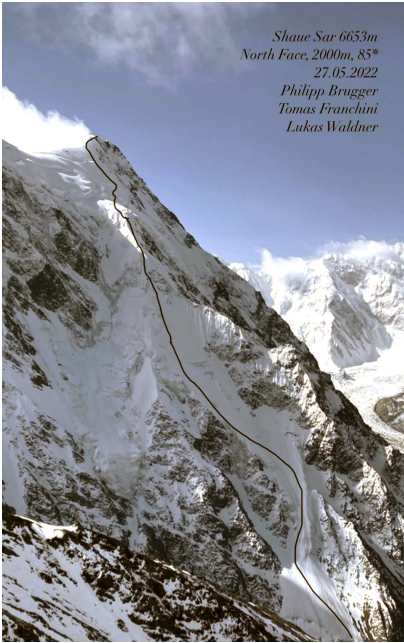
Images



The north face of Shaue Sar seen in late 2020. The 2022 route climbed the face above the climber on the left.



Ibex horns and the route climbed on the north face of Shaue Sar in late May 2022.



A foreshortened view of the route climbed on the north face of Shaue Sar. The high distant peak in cloud is Trivor (7,720m).



During the 2022 ascent of the north face of Shaue Sar. The high peak at right is Momhil Sar (7,342m).



Azam Line on the south face of Chikkorin Sar.



Dolomite Hunza on the west face of Croz von Zartgarben, Shuijerab Mountains.

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